

HCHC, and collaborated on a successful plan to shuttle HCHC children from their housing units to the BGCH for after-school programming. Today, the BGCH provides free annual BGCH membership, free year-round shuttling to and from HCHC facilities, and free hot lunches and snacks. In addition, these at-risk children receive tutoring, computer training, and homework assistance. Another partnership Mel created involved Ross Dress for Less, which provided clothes, shoes, and supplies to members of the Club for the 2010–2011 school year. Additionally, Mel partnered with Toyota of Hollywood for an annual holiday Toy Drive, and as a result of this partnership, Toyota donated a portion of their December sales to the BGCH.

I ask all Members to join me today in honoring an outstanding woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Mel Culpepper, for her exceptional service to the community.

KENDRA DIMUCCI

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 16, 2013

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Kendra DiMucci for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Kendra DiMucci is a 12th grader at Warren Tech North and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Kendra DiMucci is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Kendra DiMucci for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROBERT PITTENGER

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 16, 2013

Mr. PITTENGER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 103–105, I am not recorded because I was absent from the U.S. House of Representatives. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner.

On rollcall No. 103. Had I been present, I would have voted “yea.”

On rollcall No. 104. Had I been present, I would have voted “yea.”

On rollcall No. 105. Had I been present, I would have voted “yea.”

ELLIOTT STEELE, VINCENT
HOUSE, HONORED WITH AWARD
OF EXCELLENCE

HON. C. W. BILL YOUNG

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 16, 2013

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, Elliott Steele, the Executive Director of Vincent House, a remarkable organization in Pinellas Park, Florida, was recently honored by The National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare with an Award of Excellence at its National Council Conference.

Specifically, Mr. Steele received the Reintegration Award for Achievement for his tireless work, and that of his wife Dianne, to found Vincent House, a clean and safe haven for people recovering from mental illness.

Vincent House helps adults living with severe and persistent mental illness achieve recovery through work partnerships within the community. The more than 600 individuals who have sought help there have been treated with the utmost dignity and respect by the staff and volunteers. As a result, they have built up in themselves a sense of new-found confidence, self-esteem, and real life social and work skills that have improved their quality of life, led to their independence, and helped them regain their pride in being able to find real-life work experiences in our community.

Vincent House was the outgrowth of the love, compassion and dedication the Steele's had for their daughter, who was diagnosed in 1993 with severe mental illness issues during her freshman year of college. The Steele's decided to devote themselves to finding a way to help those like their daughter who had lost hope and for which traditional treatments were not producing results. They each quit highly successful careers in 1999 to devote their full-time focus to the cause.

By 2003, they opened the doors on Vincent House in a small storefront in a Pinellas Park strip mall. The concept was based on programs established in several other communities where a community center or club house would create a place where those with mental illness could be surrounded in a loving and supportive environment by people who listened to their dreams and helped them re-integrate into the community through volunteer and work opportunities. Those who pass through the doors of Vincent House are not considered patients, they are considered members. And once they become a member, they are a member for life.

The Steeles were joined in their quest to help those with mental illness by Bob Dillinger, the Public Defender for Pinellas and Pasco Counties, who shares a passion for helping this underserved population. Together they found funding within the community to open Vincent House and to move into a larger, stand-alone facility two years later. It is a facility that has already almost doubled in size to meet the increasing demand for these services.

Mr. Speaker, having had the privilege to tour Vincent House and attend their annual Breakfast of Hope, I have seen and heard first-hand the success stories of those who have passed through its doors and are now proudly working in our community. Every one of those club members who walks through the

door and one day walks out that door with a positive experience and a job is better than any award Elliott and Dianne Steele can receive. It is a sense of achievement that is shared by all of Vincent House's staff, volunteers and members of the board.

Vincent House is an excellent program that I believe can be replicated in communities throughout our nation. It is my hope that my colleagues in the House will take a look at Vincent House and share information about its success with their constituents back home. It is also my hope that my colleagues will say thank you to Elliott and Diane Steele for a job well done.

HONORING THE VALLEY CRIME
STOPPERS

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 16, 2013

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Valley Crime Stoppers for the tremendous efforts they have made to help crime victims in our Central Valley. During Crime Victims' Rights Week, we are reminded of the bravery of crime victims and we honor those who advocate on their behalf.

Valley Crime Stoppers has built strong relationships with the city of Fresno, local media, and law enforcement. After a robbery, drive-by shooting, or other crime is reported by the news, citizens are encouraged to call the police or Valley Crime Stoppers if they have any information concerning the incident. Victims and bystanders have a safe place to turn in Valley Crime Stoppers because it is an anonymous tip line. It is an unfortunate truth that victims are often fearful to share information with law enforcement because they have been threatened by their offender. Valley Crime Stoppers provides victims with an alternative, so they can tell their story without fear of retribution.

Educating and bringing awareness to residents are important missions of Valley Crime Stoppers. They have put together several campaigns that aim to lower crime in the Central Valley, including a television promotion that brings awareness to the very negative consequences of children being exposed to domestic violence. Another example of a Valley Crime Stoppers campaign is a poster that aims to keep neighborhoods safe by getting guns out of the hands of criminals. These campaigns, combined with other efforts made by Valley Crime Stoppers, have led to 9,598 arrests made and 461 guns recovered from the streets. Residents have been given the tools to act as change agents to keep the city of Fresno and the entire San Joaquin Valley safe. In addition to keeping citizens engaged, Valley Crime Stoppers pays individuals for tips that lead to a criminal arrest.

As Co-Chairman of the Victims' Rights Caucus, it is my honor to recognize the good work of Valley Crime Stoppers and to thank the board members at Valley Crime Stoppers for their support and activism. These individuals sincerely care about victims' rights and keeping our neighborhoods safe.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Valley Crime Stoppers for their contribution to our Valley. Their advocacy for